

CLAIMS

1. A network (11) including a plurality of devices (A...F;18,30,32), each device being capable of wireless communication with the other devices of the network, and characterised in that one of the devices (C;18) includes administration means for allowing selected devices (A,B,C;DE;BCE;18,30,32) to be associated within a domain (13;15;17;19) by providing each device (A,B,C;DE;BCE;18,30,32) with identification data, the identification data of each device (A,B,C;DE;BCE;18,30,32) being interpretable by each other device (A,B,C;DE;BCE;18,30,32) within the domain (13;15;17;19), particular modes of communication only being allowed between devices (A,B,C;DE;BCE;18,30,32) within the domain (13;15;17;19) having such identification data.
2. The network of claim 1, wherein the identification data received from the administration means includes a key (KPSD).
3. The network of claim 2, wherein the key (KPSD) is a shared key.
4. The network of claim 2, wherein the key (KPSD) is a public key of a public-private key pair, the private key being stored on the administration means.

5. The network of any one of claims 1 to 4, wherein each device (A,B,C;DE;BCE;18,30,32) has a security certificate associated therewith indicating its membership of the domain (13;15;17;19).
- 5 6. The network of any one of claims 2 to 5, including further keys (KAB,KBC,KCA,KBE,KCE) for allowing encrypted communication between the devices (A,B,C;DE;BCE;18,30,32) within the domain (13;15;17;19).
7. The network of any one of claims 1 to 6, wherein the administration 10 means transmits to each device (A,B,C;DE;BCE;18,30,32) within the domain (13;15;17;19) data indicative of the characteristics of the other devices (A,B,C;DE;BCE;18,30,32) within the domain (13;15;17;19).
8. The network of any one of claims 1 to 7, wherein the administration 15 means is transferable from one device to another.
9. The network of any one of claims 1 to 7, wherein a plurality of devices within the domain (13;15;17;19) include administration means, and means is provided to selectively enable only one of said administration means at a time.
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10. The network of any one of claims 1 to 9, including a plurality of said domains (13;15;17;19).

11. The network of claim 10, wherein a device (B,C,E) is associated with each of said plurality of domains (13;15;17;19).

12. The network of any one of the preceding claims, wherein at least one of
5 the devices (18) within the domain (19) includes resources (22,24) usable by other devices (30,32) within the domain (19), and wherein control means (28,34,40) is provided for controlling use of said resources by the said other devices (30,32).

- 10 13. The network of claim 12, wherein the control means (28,34,40) limits access by said other devices (30,32) to only selected ones of said resources.

14. The network of claim 12 or 13, wherein the control means (28,34,40) limits the amount of use by said other devices (30,32) to said resources.

- 15 15. The network of claim 12, 13 or 14, wherein the control means (28,34,40) prompts the operator of the device (18) making resources available to authorise use of said resources by said other devices (30,32) when a request for use of said resources is received therefrom.

- 20 16. A method allowing selected devices (A...F;18,30,32) within a network (11) to be associated within a domain (13;15;17;19), each device (A...F;18,30,32) being capable of wireless communication with the other devices

(A...F;18,30,32) of the domain, characterised in that the method includes adapting one device (C;18) within the domain (13;15;17;19) to provide each other device (A,B,C;DE;BCE;18,30,32) with identification data, the identification data of each device (A,B,C;DE;BCE;18,30,32) being interpretable by each other device (A,B,C;DE;BCE;18,30,32) within the domain (13;15;17;19), particular modes of communication only being allowed between devices (A,B,C;DE;BCE;18,30,32) within the domain (13;15;17;19) having such identification data.

10 17. The method of claim 16, wherein the identification data includes a key (KPSD).

18. The method of claim 17, wherein the key (KPSD) is a shared key.

15 19. The method of claim 17, wherein the key (KPSD) is a public key of a public-private key pair, the private key being stored on the adapted device.

20. The method of any one of claims 16 to 19, wherein each device (A,B,C;DE;BCE;18,30,32) has a security certificate associated therewith indicating its membership of the domain (13;15;17;19).

21. The method of any one of claims 17 to 20, including providing further keys (KAB,KBC,KCA,KBE,KCE) for allowing encrypted communication between the devices (A,B,C;DE;BCE;18,30,32) within the domain (13;15;17;19).

5 22. The method of any one of claims 16 to 21, wherein the adapted device (A,B,C;DE;BCE;18,30,32) transmits to each device (A,B,C;DE;BCE;18,30,32) within the domain (13;15;17;19) data indicative of the characteristics of the other devices (A,B,C;DE;BCE;18,30,32) within the domain (13;15;17;19).

10 23. The method of any one of claims 16 to 22, including changing the device within the domain which provides each other device with identification data.

24. The method of any one of claims 16 to 23, including allowing the formation of a plurality of said domains (13;15;17;19).

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25. The method of claim 24, wherein a device (B,C,E) is associated with each of said plurality of domains (13;15;17;19).

20 26. The method of any one of claim 16 to 25, in which at least one of the devices (18) within the domain (19) includes resources (22,24) usable by other devices (30,32) in the domain (18), wherein use of said resources (22,24) by other devices (30,32) is controlled.

27. The method of claim 26, wherein the control step limits access by said other devices (30,32) to only selected ones of said resources.
28. The method of claim 26 or 27, wherein the control step limits the amount 5 of use by said other devices (30,32) of said resources.
29. The method of claim 26, 27 or 28, wherein the control step prompts the operator of the device (18) making resources available to authorise use of said resources by said other devices (30,32) when a request for use of said resources 10 is received therefrom.